

A Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska
Section A: Enrollment
Key Findings

March, 2008

Total headcount enrollment

While postsecondary headcount enrollment across the state remained almost flat from fall 1996 to fall 2000, it increased by 8.5% between 2001 and 2006. This increase occurred even as the number of Nebraska high school graduates increased only 7.8%.

Enrollment patterns among sectors have shifted significantly from 1996-2006.

Shifts in enrollments among sectors

Changes in Nebraska's higher education enrollments, 1996-2006

- Up by 35.3% for independent colleges and universities
- Up by 21.1% for the Nebraska Community College System
- Down by 4.7% for the Nebraska State College System
- Down by 6.6% for the University of Nebraska

There are institution exceptions within each sector.

As a result of these shifts, market shares have changed.

Market share

Sector	1996	2006
University of Nebraska	44.2%	36.5%
Nebraska Community College System	30.1%	32.2%
Independent colleges and universities	18.1%	21.7%
Nebraska State College System	7.7%	6.5%

Age distribution

There has been a significant change in the enrollment age at community colleges.

Age of enrollment	1995	2005
25 or older	53.7%	39.6%
24 or younger	46.3%	60.4%

(over)

This is a dramatic shift in age groups for the community colleges and may present some challenges in accommodating younger students.

The university system, the state college system, and the independent institutions continue to have the greatest percentage of their enrollment from students age 24 or younger.

Changing workplace requirements and perhaps other factors are prompting higher levels of 25 and older enrollments in most states. That is not happening in Nebraska.

Minorities

Undergraduate minority enrollments are up by about 21.8% since 2001. Minorities (including foreign students) account for only 14.1% of all Nebraska college students. However, minorities are projected to be the source of most of Nebraska's population growth.

Total headcount enrollment increases from 2001-2006:

- White non-Hispanic: 6.7%
- Minority: 32.3%
- Foreign student: -9.5%

Gender

Female total enrollments continued to increase at greater rates than male enrollments. Overall, 55% of total enrolled students in 2006 were women.

Women outnumber men in total enrollments within each race/ethnicity. The widest gender gap was among Native Americans. In 2006, Native American total enrollment consisted of about 60% women and 40% men.

Total enrollment for both blacks and Asian/Pacific Islanders consisted of about 55% women and 45% men. Women comprised 56% of Hispanic total enrollment. For whites, women comprised about 56%.